Defence Expenditure

†3978. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether defence expenditure of India is much lower and strength of armed forces is quite excessive:

(b) if so. The percentage of defence expenditure during the last financial year; and

(c) whether its enhancement is not required ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) The Defence allocation for 2000-2001 (BE) is Rs. 58387 crores which constitutes 17.31% of total Central Government Expenditure and is 21% higher than 1999-2000 (RE). The present number of Armed Personnel in the Defence Forces is about 12.5 lakhs.

(d) ©The allocation to the Defence Services is made keeping in view their obligatory charges, essential maintenance needs, committed liabilities on ongoing schemes/programmes and prioritised new schemes and is considered adequate.

Smuggling activities through the Sea Ways

†3979. SHRI JHUMUK LAL BHENDIA ; Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Indian Coast Guard have made any specific action plan to control the smuggling and other undesirable activities taking place through the sea ways;

(b) if, so the financial provisions made for tlie implementation of the said action plan; and

(c) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (c) The charter of duties and functions in the maritime zone of India enumerated in the Coast Guard Act. 1978 includes, besides other duties, rendering assistance to the customs and other authorities in anti-smuggling

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.